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IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (29 May 68) FOR OT RD 68X019

5 June 1968

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SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report - Operation FORREST, 1st Australian Task Force Vietnam, Period 23 November 1967 - 5 January 1968 (U)

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1. Subject report is forwarded as inclosure for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 5b, AR 525-15.
2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Kenneth G. Wickham

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

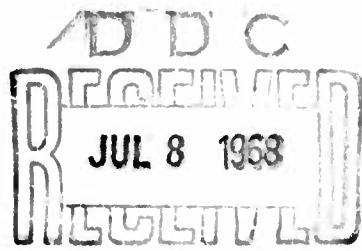
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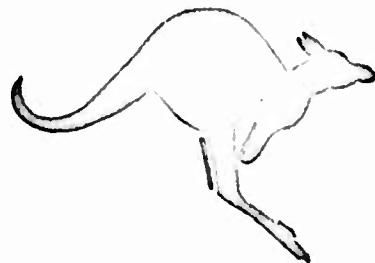
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1st AUSTRALIAN TASK FORCE VIETNAM



COMBAT OPERATIONS AFTER ACTION REPORT
OPERATION FORREST

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AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES

HEADQUARTERS 1ST AUSTRALIAN TASK FORCE VIETNAM

NUI DAT

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report.

TO: Commanding General
II Field Force Vietnam
Attention AC of S. G3. (6)

COPIES TO: HQ AFV (7)
HQ NZ Force Vietnam (2)
HQ 1 ALSG
HQ 6 Task Force (3)
HQ 10 Task Force (3)
Internal (15)

1. Reference is made to maps VIETNAM, 1 : 50,000, Sheets 6429 I, 6429 IV, 6430 II, 6430 III.

2. Name and Type of Operation: Operation FOREST - rice denial operation.

3. Dates of Operation: The operation was conducted over the period 23 Nov 67 to 5 Jan 68.

4. Location: PHUOC TUY Province.

5. Command Headquarters: HQ 1 ATF.

6. Reporting Officer: Brigadier R.L. HUGHES, DSO.

7. Unit Commanders:

- a. 2 RAR Lt Col N.R. CHARLESWORTH.
- b. 7 RAR Lt Col E.H. SMITH.
- c. 4 Fd Regt Lt Col R.J. GARDNER.
- d. A Sqn 3 Cav Regt Maj G.J. MURPHY.
- e. 1 Fd Sqn Maj J.H. KEMP.
- f. 1 SAS Sqn Maj D. BURNETT.
- g. 1 ARU Maj W.N. LUNN.

8. Task Organization.

HQ 1 ATF	1 ARU
2 RAR	Det 1 Div Int Unit
7 RAR	161 (Indep) Recce Flt
A Sqn 3 Cav Regt	A Sect 1 Topo Svy Tp
4 Fd Regt	1 Aust QA Unit
1 Fd Sqn	Psy Ops
1 SAS Sqn	

9. Supporting Forces.

a. Armour.

(1) A Sqn 3 Cav Regt was used in both Cavalry and APC roles.

(2) A Sqn was used on the following task:

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(a) Carriage of infantry to perimeter of rice paddy areas. Mobility was limited as APCs were not allowed on the paddy during the harvest. 6

(b) Security of LZs and PZs.

(c) Route security to and from FSBs.

(d) Security of FSBs.

(e) Command and control of road moves.

(f) Patrols from FSBs.

(g) During Operation LAWLEY A Sqn assisted in the rapid redeployment of infantry coys.

(h) Provision of one tp for the TF Ready Reaction Force.

b. Artillery.

(1) Grouping.

(a) 108 Fd Bty in direct support of 2 RAR.

(b) 106 Fd Bty in direct support of 7 RAR from 23 Nov 67 to 16 Dec 67.

(c) 161 Fd Bty RNZA at priority call to 7 RAR 16 Dec 67 to 27 Dec 67.

(d) 161 Fd Bty RNZA in general support 1 ATF 23 Nov 67 to 16 Dec 67.

(e) 106 Fd Bty reverted to direct support of 7 RAR on 27 Dec 67.

(f) Bty A 1/83 US Arty remained in general support, reinforcing 4 Fd Regt.

(2) Deployment.

(a) Artillery Tactical Headquarters and Regimental Headquarters remained at 1 ATF Base.

(b) To provide continuous field gun support, fire support bases were established as follows: (See Annex P)

- i. 106 Bty occupied FSB ALPHA YS3974 from 27 Nov 67 to 7 Dec 67.
- ii. 106 Bty occupied FSB BRAVO YS2570 from 7 Dec 67 to 16 Dec 67.
- iii. 161 Bty occupied FSB CHARLIE YS2962 from 16 Dec 67 - 23 Dec 67.
- iv. 108 Bty occupied FSB RINGO YS5365 from 27 Dec 67 to 31 Dec 67.
- v. 106 Bty occupied FSB ALNWROOKE YS4573 from 2 Jan 68 to 5 Jan 68.
- vi. 108 Bty remained at HORSESHOE YS4962 with the exception of its occupation of FSB RINGO and a period from 23 - 31 Dec at NUI DIT.

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vii. A Pl A Bty 1/23 (two 8" guns) occupied a FSP at YS253710 from 9 Dec 67 to 13 Dec 67.

(c) A total of 10 battery moves were made, five by road and five by air.

(3) An active policy of DF adjustment was carried out, with a requirement for at least one adjusted DF for each separate sub unit location. Due to the large number of fire missions this involved, and the time required, it was necessary to advise company commanders to halt their sub units early enough to adjust DFs in daylight; this was not, however, always done resulting in many attempts to adjust DF by night.

(4) White phosphorous rounds were used to burn off unauthorised paddi; this was generally unsuccessful due to the water remaining in the paddies.

(5) A heavy harassing fire programme was fired. FOs assisted in H and I planning by submitting target lists based on local intelligence assessments at company level. These targets were coordinated at Task Force level.

(6) Artillery fire was at all times prompt and effective, clearances being obtained with the minimum of delay.

c. Engineers.

(1) 1 Fd Sqn was given the following tasks:

(a) Provide combat engr teams when required to 2 RAR, 7 RAR and mini teams to A Sqn 3 Cav Regt.

(b) Repair gaps in the HORSESHOE HILL YS4962 - LONG PHUOC HAI YS5153 minefield fence.

(c) Provide dozer assistance when required to FSBs.

(2) Combat teams and mini teams were provided to the units as required. The general concept was that teams were held on stand by at 1 ATF Base unless specifically required. This allowed 1 Fd Sqn to maintain sufficient men in the Base to continue with the 3 RAR Base development programme which was in progress during the operation.

(3) The repair of the minefield fence was completed by 2 Tp 1 Fd Sqn on 16 Dec and 17 Dec 67. Security was provided by 4/48 ARVN Bn.

(4) A large natural cave complex at YS337679 was destroyed by 2 Tp 1 Fd Sqn (Detailed diagram is shown at Annex A). This cave complex was in use by the VC prior to Op LORNE.

d. Aviation.

(1) No 9 Sqn RAAF (UH1D, UH1E) supported 1 ATF throughout the operation.

(2) Extent of Employment and Effectiveness.

(a) RAAF helicopters were used with and in addition to US Assault Helicopter Cos (AHC) in troop moves by air.

(b) Effective support for the following activities was provided:

i. Resupply.

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ii. Evacuation of captured rice.

iii. Command and liaison.

iv. Visual reconnaissance.

e. US Army Aviation. During Operation FORREST support was provided with CH47, CH54 and AHGs lifting 4,700 troops and 1,062.1 short tons of equipment and supplies between 23 Nov 67 and 5 Jan 68. A Light Fire Team (LFT) was provided daily and remained on standby at 1 ATF Base.

f. USAF. Twenty one close air support missions were flown in support of the operation.

10. Intelligence.

a. This operation was planned to follow on after the earlier operations AINSLIE, KENMORE and SANTA FE which had caused considerable damage to the VC logistic system. Captured documents indicated serious food shortages were being experienced by the VC in and around PHUOC TUY.

b. Harvest time Dec/Jan, is considered by the VC the best time to restock with rice because of the large amounts of it that are available and the difficulty that RVNAF and RVN troops have in controlling it. All Province intelligence sources (Sector S2 (most equivalent G (Int)), Revolutionary Development Cadre (RD), Census Grievance (CG), Province Recon Unit (PRU), Committee for the Collation of Intelligence and Conduct of Operations against the VC Infrastructure (ICEX), District Operations Intelligence Coordinating Centre (DOICC), 10th Military Interrogation Detachment (10 MID) and 1 ATF Intelligence Units) were used to get the broadest and most accurate picture possible of the resupply network within PHUOC TUY used by the VC at harvest time. This information showed the most likely places the VC would use to procure rice and the routes he would use to move it to restock his caches and major bases. A priority for searching villages was also established. This information was transferred to a Map overlay Annex P. These methods proved successful in determining where and how the VC would go about his resupply during the operation.

c. The frequency and nature of the contacts prevented the majority of VC from infiltrating the populated areas. It is probable that the VC obtained and extracted rice through the Northern area of the TAOR where VC movement in small groups was observed, but where the operation did not take effect until late in the harvest period. VC movement was restricted to small parties and any large scale resupply was thwarted. Cordon and search of six villages resulted in 400 suspects being detained 42 of which were identified as VC infrastructure.

d. During the operation:

(1) Infiltration groups were detected and intercepted on known VC approach routes.

(2) Important staging and lay up areas were detected and denied to the VC at the time most critical to his resupply plan.

(3) Confirmed VC and sympathizers were apprehended.

(4) 1 ATF penetrated the CHAU DUC District base HQ and CHAU DUC Coy (C41) base areas and forced the VC to withdraw to the NORTH and away from the most important rice areas.

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(5) Captured useful documents which proved valuable for background intelligence study.

11. Mission. 1 ATF between 23 Nov 67 and 5 Jan 68 in close co-operation and coordination with ARVN and GVN, province and district officials was to conduct rice denial operations in PHUOC TUY Province.

12. Concept of Operations.

a. General Outline. During the operation battalions would be required:

- (1) To conduct saturation patrolling astride known avenues of approach to apprehend couriers.
- (2) To search out known staging areas for camps, personnel and caches.
- (3) In co-operation with GVN officials conduct cordon and search operations in nominated villages and hamlets.
- (4) To search and destroy in allotted AO's.

b. 2 RAR.

(1) Conduct operations in the allotted AO from 230800H Nov 67 to 050800H Jan 68 (Annex P).

(2) Take the HORSESHOE Company under comd from 221700H Nov 67.

(3) Throughout the operation maintain one company in the LONG GREEN, centre of mass YS5553, with frequent ambushes on the gaps in the fence from HORSESHOE YS4961 to PHUOC MAI YS5153.

(4) From 230800H Nov 67 to 050800H Dec 67 carry out maximum patrolling astride the avenues of approach in the AO.

(5) Search and destroy within the AO paying particular attention to the staging areas indicated on 1 ATF Intelligence Assessment (Annex P).

(6) By 051700H Jan 68 conduct cordon and search operations in the following villages (Listed in order of priority):

(a) HOI MY	YS5056.
(b) AN NHUT	YS4659.
(c) LONG DIEN NORTH	YS435598.
(d) TAM PHUOC	YS4558.
(e) DAT DO SOUTH EAST	YS495590.
(f) PHUOC LOI	YS5057.

(7) On order assist in the 1 ATF cordon and search of BINH GLA YS4877.

(8) Be prepared to provide a reaction force of one company on one hour's notice, for Ready Reaction Force activities against tax collection points, small base locations, caches etc found as a result of 1 SAS Sqn or air recce activities.

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c. 7 RAR.

(1) Conduct operations in allotted AO from 230800H Nov 67 to 050800H Jan 68.

(2) From 230800H Nov 67 to 050800H Dec 67 carry out maximum patrolling astride the avenues of approach in allotted AO.

(3) From 230800H Nov 67 to 050800H Jan 68 provide "distant" patrol protection to AP SUOI NGHE YS43, and regular liaison visits to that village.

(4) Search and destroy within the AO paying particular attention to the Staging areas indicated on 1 ATF Intelligence Assessment (Annex P).

(5) By 051700H Jan 68 conduct Cordon and Search operations in the following villages (Listed in order of priority):

(a) PHUOC HOA YS2862.

(b) HOA LONG YS4264.

(c) PHU MY YS2574.

(d) ONG TRINH YS2563.

(6) On order assist in the 1 ATF Cordon and Search of BINH GIA YS4877.

(7) Be prepared to provide a reaction force of one company on one hour's notice, for Ready Reaction Force activities against tax collection points, small base locations, caches etc found as a result of 1 SIS Sqn or air recce activities.

d. A Sqn 3 Cav Regt. From 230800H Nov 67 to 050800H Jan 68:

(1) Be prepared to assist in cordon and search operations.

(2) Be prepared to assist in search and destroy operations.

(3) Be prepared to "check out" paddy workers during the rice harvest period.

(4) Be prepared in cooperation with National Police to set up temporary check points on Route 15.

(5) Hold one troop as a reaction force on one hour's notice.

e. Artillery.

(1) 4 Fd Regt. Remained in DS of 1 ATF.

(2) 1/83 Arty (US). Remained in General Support (GS), reinforcing 4 Fd Regt.

(3) 1 Bty 2/35 Arty (US). Remained in GS, reinforcing 4 Fd Regt.

(4) Be prepared to provide dismounted troops to assist in cordon and search operations.

f. 1 Fd Sqn.

(1) When requested provide combat engineer teams, to scale, to 2 RAR, 7 RAR and A Sqn 3 Cav Regt.

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(2) Be prepared to provide a small engineer team to assist 4/48 ARVN Bn in repairing the HORNETSHOE Fence.

g. 1 SIS Son. On order from HQ 1 ATF conduct patrolling, searching and ambushing in allotted AO from 230800H Nov 67 to 050800H Jan 68 (Annex P).

h. 1 ARU.

(1) Commencing 230800H Nov 67 until 150800H Dec 67 provide two patrols by day and night in the ARU AO (Annex P).

(2) Be prepared to assist in cordon and search operations.

i. Det 1 Div Int Unit. Assist in cordon and search operations.

j. 161 (Indep) Recon Flt. From 230800H Nov 67 to 050800H Jan 68 provide one H13 in DS of each 2 RAR and 7 RAR.

k. A Sect 1 Topo Svy Tp. Be prepared to provide survey parties in the operational and village areas.

l. 1 Aust CI Unit. Be prepared to assist in cordon and search operations.

m. Psy Ops.

(1) Coordinate with ARVN, GVN and Civilian Organization for Revolutionary Development (CORDS) representatives in developing an intense Psy Ops programme in an attempt to persuade the people not to sell rice to the VC but only to accredited buyers.

(2) Prepare taped messages for use by voice aircraft over all districts of PHUOC TUY Province.

(3) Ensure that sufficient quantities of explanatory leaflets are available for troops to hand to householders in the event of house searches.

(4) Be prepared to make quick reaction tapes or leaflets to support the rice denial operation.

n. HQ Coy 1 ATF. The Defence Platoon is to be prepared to assist in cordon and search and check point operations.

o. GVN PHUOC TUY Province. The Senior Advisor PHUOC TUY Province is requested to arrange with the PHUOC TUY Province Chief for the following tasks to be carried out by ARVN and RF units:

(1) Provision of a Check Point on Route 14 WEST of BAU LUNG YS3760.

(2) Continuous ambushes on the routes leading NORTH and EAST out of the LONG KAI Hill, centre of mass YS4653.

(3) Beach control in the vicinity of PHUOC KAI and WEST of the fence to deny the use of the beach and the sea routes.

(4) Active and continuous patrolling of the fence. SOUTH of BAU LUNG DO to detect and repair any breaches.

(5) Active rice denial operations in the XUYEN MOI village and AO (YS6568).

(6) Cordon and search of the following villages:

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- (a) PHU HAI YS3261.
- (b) LONG CAT YS2961.
- (c) LONG HUONG YS3561.
- (d) LONG DINH YS4359.
- (e) PHUOC HAI YS5153.
- (f) NUI NHON YS5963.

13. Execution. Operation FOREST commenced on the 23 Nov 67. During the operation and as part of Op FOREST, there were a number of complementary operations.

Serial	Date	Operational Nickname	Unit	Type of Operation
a	23 Nov 67	ODNADATTA	7 RAR	Cordon and search (HOA LONG YS4264).
b	3 Dec 67	CANUNGNA	2 RAR	Cordon and search (HOI MY YS5056).
c	Planned 7 Dec 67	ALDERLEY	2 RAR	Cordon and search (AN NHUT YS4659). Cancelled due to ARVN cordon and search 6 Dec 67 on the same village.
d	11 Dec 67	SHEPPARTON	7 RAR	Cordon and search (PHU MY YS2574).
e	13 Dec 67	DIMBOOLA	7 RAR	Cordon and search (ONG TRINH YS2563).
f	15 Dec 67	MELBOURNE	7 RAR	Cordon and search (PHUOC HOI YS2862)
g	18 Dec 67 - 21 Dec 67	IORNE	7 RAR	Search and destroy (NGI DINH Mountains YS3465).
h	23 Dec 67	LAWLEY	1 ATF	Cordon and search (NGAI GIAO YS4677).

14. Sequence of Events.a. D-1 Day 22 Nov 67.

(1) 2 RAR issued orders for the operation. The op was to be conducted by phases. At this time the orders were given for the first two phases:

(a) Phase 1.

i. D Coy to assist 7 RAR in the cordon and search of HOA LONG YS4264 24 Nov 67 and to deploy to coy A0 25 Nov 67.

ii. A Coy, C Coy and V Coy to deploy to allotted AOs 23 Nov 67.

iii. B Coy reaction coy NUI DAT.

(b) Phase 2. Search, destroy and ambush in allotted AOs.

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(c) Phase 3. (Approx 4 Dec 67) Cordon and search HOI MY YS5056 orders to be issued later.

(d) Subsequent Phases. Orders to be issued later. Sequence and probable timings as follows:

i. Cordon and search ops in the following villages:

1 AN NHUT YS4659 7 Dec 67.

2 LONG DIEN North YS435598 18 Dec 67.

3 TAM PHUOC YS4558 21 Dec 67.

4 Assist in 1 ATF cordon and search of NGAI GIAO YS4677. Date to be confirmed.

5 DAT DO South East YS495590 27 Dec 67.

6 PHUOC LOI YS5057 5 Jan 68.

Note. Operations listed as 2, 3, 5, 6 above, were not conducted due to ARVN operations in the areas and secondly, subsequent tasks of higher priority.

ii. Between cordon and search ops coy activities in allotted AO's will continue.

iii. Bn will be in base 24 ~ 26 Dec 67.

(2) 7 RAR issued orders for Operation OODNADATTA.

(a) General Outline. 7 RAR Gr consisting of 7 RAR plus Tp A Sqn 3 Cav Regt plus one ACV, 106 Fd Bty (dismounted), 161 Fd Bty (-) (Pl size group), two combat engineer teams 1 Fd Sqn, 1 SAS Sqn (-), D Coy 2 RAR, 1 ARU with under ccmd Dco Pl HQ Co, 1 ATF, Det 1 Div Int Unit, three IPs, Det 1 Div Pro Unit, team of 1 Aust CI Unit, National police including PFF and women police, ARVN troops and Psy Ops Det. Task to cordon HOI LONG YS4164 village before first light on 24 Nov 67. Commencing at first light the village to be searched, all inhabitants to be screened and suspect persons moved to BARIA STADIUM YS3862 for further interrogation by VN personnel.

b. D Day 23 Nov 67.

(1) 2 RAR (-) commenced operations in its allotted AO centre of mass YS5264. D Coy assisted 7 RAR in Operation OODNADATTA.

(2) 7 RAR (+) commenced Operation OODNADATTA, cordon and search of HOI LONG YS4164.

c. 24 Nov 67.

(1) 2 RAR (-) continued search and destroy operations. D Coy returned to 1 ATF Base.

(2) 7 RAR concluded Operation OODNADATTA. A total of nine suspects were detained and evacuated to PHUOC TUY Province HQ BARIA for further interrogation.

(3) 1 SAS Sqn deployed two LRRPs.

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d. 25 Nov 67.

(1) 2 RAR (-) continued search and destroy operations. At 1600H at YS559670 A Coy contacted 4 VC without result. D Coy commenced search and destroy operations.

(2) 7 RAR remained in 1 ATF Base and issued orders for the period 26 Nov to 4 Dec 67.

(a) General Outline.

i. Cordon and attack a known enemy base camp YS338707.

ii. Search and destroy in allotted 10s.

(3) 1 SAS Sqn deployed two LRRPs.

e. 26 Nov 67.

(1) 2 RAR (-) continued search and destroy operations. At 1018H at YS506691 C Coy contacted 2 VC without result. At 1015H at YS586593 D Coy sighted 1 VC, contact was not initiated. At YS564655 A Coy located and destroyed a VC Base Camp consisting of 8 bunkers and a cook house.

(2) 7 RAR (-) secured FSB ALPHA and LZ ROCK (see Annex P).

(3) 1 SAS Sqn extracted one LRRP.

f. 27 Nov 67.

(1) A Sqn 3 Cav Regt conducted a road runner and clearing patrol between 1 ATF Base and NGA1 GLA0 YS4677.

(2) 4 Fd Regt 106 Fd Bty was inserted into FSB ALPHA.

(3) 2 RAR (-) continue. search and destroy operations. At YS558668 A Coy located a VC Base Camp which was booby trapped. A booby trap was set off with the result 2 Aust KIA, 1 Aust WIA.

(4) 7 IAR (-) was inserted into LZ ROCK to commence a cordon and attack of a known VC Base Camp. At 1646H D Coy contacted an estimated 20 VC and were engaged by machine gun fire. The MG was destroyed with M72 rocket fire. The VC withdrew SOUTH but continued the contact with RPG fire from the WEST. The contact was broken at 1815H with the result 3 VC KIA (EC), 2 VC WIA, 1 Aust KIA and 17 Aust WIA. At 1605H B Coy in a cordon position to the SOUTH of the camp contacted 2 VC with the result 2 VC KIA (EC).

g. 28 Nov 67.

(1) 2 RAR (-) continued search and destroy operations. At YS558668 with the assistance of 1 Fd Sqn elements detected and removed two M16 mines and two Chicom grenades set up as booby traps. At YS52692 A Coy located and destroyed a camp consisting of 9 bunkers interconnected by a tunnel system.

(2) 7 RAR (-) continued search and destroy operations. At 1050H at YS333705 D Coy contacted 2 VC resulting in 1 VC KIA (EC). At 1300H at YS331697 B Coy contacted 1 VC without result. The VC Base Camp at YS333707 was investigated and found to consist of 9 huts and 100 metres of trench. The camp contained 39 individual weapons, 2 crew served weapons, 3 mines, 10 grenades, a large quantity of ammunition, clothing and documents.

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(3) 1 SAS Sqn extracted one LRRP.

(4) 161 (Indep) Recce Flt. At 1630H at YS563574 two H13 helicopters sighted 1 VC and engaged with SA with result 1 VC KIA (BC).

b. 29 Nov 67.

(1) 2 RAR (-) continued search and destroy operations. At 0730H at YS503647 C Coy located and destroyed one (US) M16 mine and two RUSSLAN type M16 mines.

(2) 7 RAR (-) continued search and destroy operations in AO ZULU (See Annex Q). At 1037H at YS320702 B Coy contacted 15 VC resulting in 1 Aust WIA. At YS333709 D Coy located a cache which contained 300 lbs of polished rice. At YS333707 D Coy located a VC Base Camp consisting of 3 huts and bunkers, 5 weapon pits and a 75 metres range. The camp contained one rifle.

(3) 1 SAS Sqn at 1430H at YS567767 a LRRP contacted 3 VC resulting in 3 VC KIA (BC) and 2 Chicom 7.62 rifles captured. The LRRP was extracted.

i. 30 Nov 67.

(1) 2 RAR (-) continued search and destroy operations. At 0830H at YS582593 D Coy contacted 3 VC resulting in 2 VC KIA (BC) and 1 VC WIA. At 1400H at YS550644 A Coy triggered off a VC mine resulting in 1 Aust KIA and 7 Aust WIA.

(2) 7 RAR (-) continued search and destroy operations. At 1300H at YS325706 B Coy attacked an occupied VC Base Camp resulting in 3 Aust WIA.

j. 1 Dec 67.

(1) 2 RAR (-) continued search and destroy operations. At 2035H at YS558588 D Coy contacted 2 VC without result.

(2) 7 RAR continued search and destroy operations. At 2110H at YS393745 A Coy contacted 2 VC without result.

k. 2 Dec 67.

(1) 2 RAR (-) continued search and destroy operations. At 1030H at YS579593 D Coy contacted 6 VC resulting in 4 VC KIA (BC), 1 VC WIA and 3 weapons captured.

(2) 7 RAR continued search and destroy operations. At YS327714 B Coy located a VC Base Camp which contained 2 weapons and a number of Chicom stick grenades.

l. 3 Dec 67.

(1) 2 RAR.

(a) 2 RAR (-) continued search and destroy operations. At 1700H at YS551648 A Coy contacted 2 VC with the result, 1 VC KIA (BC).

(b) The Tac HQ plus two Coys commenced Operation CUNUNGRA.

(2) 7 RAR continued search and destroy operations. At 1100H at YS315755 D Coy contacted 3 VC with the result 1 VC KIA (BC), 1 VC WIA and one AK47 captured. At 1600H at YS315755 Sp Coy contacted 2 VC with the result, 1 VC KIA (BC), 1 VC WIA and one AK47 captured.

/12.

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12.

m. 4 Dec 67.

(1) 2 RAR continued search and destroy operations, concluded Operation CANUNGKA and issued orders for Operation ALDERLEY. A total of 29 people were detained for further interrogation as a result of Operation CANUNGKA.

(2) 7 RAR (-) continued search and destroy operations. B Coy returned to 1 ATF Base.

n. 5 Dec 67.

(1) 2 RAR (-) continued search and destroy operations. At 1259H at YS559671 C Coy contacted 3 VC with the result, 1 VC KIA (BC), 1 VC WIA, two weapons and one grenade captured.

(2) 7 RAR (-) continued search and destroy operations.

o. 6 Dec 67.

(1) 2 RAR continued search and destroy operations.

(2) 7 RAR continued search and destroy operations and issued orders for the establishment of FSB BRAVO and the commencement of search and destroy operations in new AOs centre of mass YS3068. Included in the orders were detailed orders for the following operations:

(a) Op SHEPPARTON, Cordon and search of PHU MY YS2574 on 11/12 Dec 67.

(b) Op DIMBOOLA, Cordon and search of ONG TRINH YS2568 and YS2666 on 13/14 Dec 67.

(c) Op MELBOURNE, Cordon and search of PHUOC HOA YS2862 on 15/16 Dec 67.

(3) General Outline. 7 RAR group consisting Tp A Sqn 3 Cav Regt, three MP Det ATF Pro Unit, Det 1 Div Int Unit, Det 1 Aust CI Unit, National Police, Field Force Police, Women Police and Interpreters. Task to cordon each village on the dates stated. The villages to be search and all inhabitants screened. Suspect persons to be moved to BARIA STADIUM for further investigation by VN personnel. FSB BRAVO to be reinforced by A Sqn 3 Cav Regt (-).

p. 7 Dec 67.

(1) A Sqn 3 Cav Regt secured FSB BRAVO (see Annex P) for the move of 106 Fd Bty from FSB ALPHA.

(2) 2 RAR continued search and destroy operations.

(3) 7 RAR redeployed to new AOs to continue search and destroy operations after a helicopter assault into LZ GREEN YS3073.

(4) 1 SAS Sqn extracted two LNRPs.

q. 8 Dec 67.

(1) 2 RAR (-) continued search and destroy operations. At 1513H at YS574605 B Coy contacted 6 VC with the result 1 VC KIA (BC), one AK47, 100 rounds of SA ammunition and 1 pack captured.

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(2) 7 RAR continued search and destroy operations. At 0740H at YS300734 A Coy contacted 1 VC with the result 1 VC WIA. At YS299736 A Coy located a VC Base Camp which contained explosives, one M18A1 claymore mine, twenty chicom grenades, one flare, some documents and tools. At YS311746 C Coy located one hut which contained salad oil and 610 lbs of rice.

(3) 1 SAS Sqn extracted one LRRP.

(4) 161 (Indep) Recce Flt. At YS402747 a H13 helicopter flying in support of 7 RAR received ground fire resulting in the pilot WIA and no damage to the helicopter.

r. 9 Dec 67.

(1) 4 Fd Regt. A Bty 1/83 (US) Arty was deployed from 1 ATF Base to FSB BRAVO.

(2) 2 RAR (-) continued search and destroy operations. At YS573601 B Coy contacted 2 VC with the result 1 VC KIA, 1 AK47 and 140 rounds of ammunition captured.

(3) 7 RAR (-) continued search and destroy operations. In YT3071 B Coy located numerous small caches all were old and not used recently.

(4) 1 SAS Sqn deployed one LRRP.

s. 10 Dec 67.

(1) 1/83 (US) Arty was escorted by 3 Tp A Sqn from FSB BRAVO to 1 ATF Base.

(2) 2 RAR and 7 RAR continued search and destroy operations.

(3) 161 (Indep) Recce Flt. At YS533572 a H13 helicopter received ground fire. The area was engaged by artillery without result.

t. 11 Dec 67.

(1) 2 RAR continued search and destroy operations. At YS565678 A Coy contacted 5 VC with the result 2 VC KIA, 3 weapons and 7 packs captured.

(2) 7 RAR moved to cordon positions in preparation for the cordon and search of PHU MY, YS2574.

(3) 1 SAS Sqn. Three LRRPs were deployed and one extracted. At YS619591 a LRRP contacted 6 VC with the result 1 VC WIA.

u. 12 Dec 67.

(1) 2 RAR continued search and destroy operations.

(2) 7 RAR continued search and destroy operations and concluded Operation SHEPPARTON the cordon and search of PHU MY YS2574. A total of 26 people were detained for further interrogation.

(3) 1 SAS Sqn. At 1500H at YS546793 a LRRP contacted 7 VC resulting in 7 VC KIA and 2 weapons captured. One LRRP was extracted.

v. 13 Dec 67.

(1) 2 RAR continued search and destroy operations.

/14.

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(2) 7 RAR continued search and destroy operations and commenced Operation DIMBOOLA, the cordon and search of ONG TRINH YS2568 and YS2666.

w. 14 Dec 67.

(1) 2 RAR continued search and destroy operations. At 0710H at YS592600 B Coy contacted 2 VC without result.

(2) 7 RAR continued search and destroy operations and concluded Operation DIMBOOLA. A total of 15 suspects were detained.

(3) 1 SAS Sqn extracted one LRRP.

x. 15 Dec 67.

(1) 2 RAR continued search and destroy operations.

(2) 7 RAR continued search and destroy operations and commenced Operation MELBOURNE, the cordon and search of PHUOC HOA YS2862.

y. 16 Dec 67.

(1) 2 RAR continued search and destroy operations. At 1430H C Coy became op con to 7 RAR.

(2) 7 RAR continued search and destroy operations and concluded Operation MELBOURNE. A total of 17 suspects were detained.

(3) 1 SAS Sqn at 1715H at YS661814 a LRRP contacted 3 VC with the result 1 VC KIA.

z. 17 Dec 67.

(1) 2 RAR and 7 RAR continued search and destroy operations.

aa. 18 Dec 67.

(1) 2 RAR continued search and destroy operations. The cordon and search of LONG DIEN North was cancelled due to ARVN operations in the same area.

(2) 7 RAR commenced Operation LORNE, a search and destroy operation in NUI DINH Mountains YS3465. Bn HQ, C and D Coys were inserted into a LZ at YS347647. A and B Coys with C Coy 2 RAR were deployed into blocking positions NORTH of the NUI DINH Mountains.

bb. 19 Dec 67.

(1) 2 RAR continued search and destroy operations.

(2) 7 RAR continued Operation LORNE. At 1635H at YS337679 C Coy contacted 3 VC with the result 1 Aust WIA.

cc. 20 Dec 67.

(1) 2 RAR continued search and destroy operations.

(2) 7 RAR continued Operation LORNE. At YS337679 C Coy located 2 VC bodies killed in the contact 191635H. At 1000H at YS336695 A Coy contacted 3 VC with the result 3 VC KIA and 3 weapons captured. At YS337669 C Coy located a camp which contained 4 rifles, 1 D10 claymore and 2 Chicom grenades. At YS346685 D Coy located a cache containing 37 rifles and some ammunition.

/15.

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15.

dd. 21 Dec 67.

(1) 4 Fd Regt. 161 Fd Bty RNZA was extracted from FSPB CHARLIE YS2962 to 1 ATF Base.

(2) 2 RAR continued search and destroy operations. All elements except V Coy returned to 1 ATF Base. V Coy continued patrol operations in the LONG GREEN YS55559 from HORSESHOE HILL YS4962.

(3) 7 RAR conclude Operation LOISIE. At 0910H at YS333694 B Coy contacted 5 VC without result. 7 RAR returned to 1 ATF Base.

ee. 22 Dec 67.

(1) 1 ATF commenced Operation LAWLEY, the cordon and search of NGAI GLAO, consisting of hamlets LA VAN YS465773, VINH THANH YS468779 and NGAI GLAO YS464793. 7 RAR was to cordon and search the first two hamlets, 2 RAR the last hamlet. The operation commenced at 0800H with a FSB established in area YS4471. The cordon was inserted by air and APCs and was in position by 1830H.

(2) 1 SAS Sqn extracted two LRRPs.

ff. 23 Dec 67.

(1) 1 ATF continued Operation LAWLEY. A Sqn elements secured Route 2 for movement of bn road convoys. By 0730H the screening centres were erected and at 0800H the searches commenced. 1 ATF deployed a Control HQ to NGAI GLAO during 23 Dec to control the operation. At 1400H the operation was complete. A total of 1218 civilians were screened of which 43 were obtained for ID card irregularities and a further 50 suspects were evacuated for further investigation by the Provincial Authorities.

(2) All units returned to 1 ATF Base for the Christmas Truce period.

gg. 24 Dec 67. 1 ATF remained in Base locations except for patrolling of the TAOR. The Christmas Truce was observed between 241800H to 261800H.

hh. 25 Dec 67. The same as for 24 Dec 67.

ii. 26 Dec 67. The same as for 24 Dec 67 except 1 SAS Sqn deployed 1 LRRP.

jj. 27 Dec 67.

(1) A Sqn assisted 2 RAR in securing FSB RINGO YS5365.

(2) 4 Fd Regt. 108 Fd Bty deployed to FSB RINGO.

(3) 2 RAR recommenced search and destroy operations in a new AO centre of mass YS5870.

(a) General Outline.

i. Phase 1 (AM 27 Dec). A Coy plus one tp of APCs secured FSB RINGO and an LZ for FSB at YS532658. 108 Fd Bty flew into FSB RINGO.

ii. Phase 2 (PM 27 Dec). D and C Coys were inserted into the new AO and commenced search and destroy operations in allotted AOs.

/16.

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16.

(4) 7 RAR recommenced search and destroy operations.
(5) 1 SAS Sqn at 0940H at YS287725 a LRRP during insertion contacted 2 VC without result. At 1366H at YS762678 a LRRP during insertion contacted 2 VC with the result 1 Aust WIA. Both LRRPs were extracted, a further LRRP was deployed.

kk. 28 Dec 67.

(1) 1 ATF elements continued search and destroy operations.
(2) 2 RAR. W Coy relieved V Coy at HORSESHOE HILL and on completion of its relief V Coy moved into its allotted AO to commence search and destroy operations.

ll. 29 Dec 67. 1 ATF elements continued search and destroy operations.

mm. 30 Dec 67.

(1) 2 RAR continued search and destroy operations. At 0710H at YS562575 V Coy contacted 4 VC without result.
(2) 7 RAR continued search and destroy operations.

nn. 31 Dec 67.

(1) 2 RAR except V Coy and W Coy returned to 1 ATF Base.
(2) 7 RAR returned to 1 ATF Base.
(3) 1 ATF elements commenced the New Year Truce at 1800H.

oo. 1 Jan 68.

(1) 1 ATF remained in Base locations except for patrolling of the TAOR. At 0940H at YS496670 a 2 RAR patrol were fired on by 6 VC, the patrol returned fire without result. The New Year truce continued till 1800H.

pp. 2 Jan 68.

(1) 1 ATF deployed to new AOs to continue search and destroy operations.
(2) 4 Fd Regt. 106 Fd Bty deployed to FSB ALANBROOKE YS4578.
(3) 2 RAR deployed A Coy by APC to search and destroy in an area centre of mass YS5073. The area of search was to include the EASTERN edge of BINH BI rubber plantation and the SOUTHERN edge of DUC THINH AO. D Coy with 2 sections of mors was deployed by APC to establish a coy base and mortar FSB P.M YS5477 (Annex P). V Coy continued to maintain domination of the area of the LONG GREEN YS5659.
(4) 7 RAR deployed to new AOs to continue search and destroy operations. Bn HQ, B and C Cos moved by APC to vic YS458782. B Coy secured FSB ALANBROOKE. After 106 Bty was in action at the FSB, A and D Cos were inserted by helicopters in a LZ in vic YS450341. At 1315H at YS436854 A Coy contacted 1 VC without result. At 1330H at YS435847 D Coy contacted 2 VC with the result 2 VC KIA, 1 weapon and 1 D10 claymore captured. At YS415802 C Coy located a new camp consisting of 2 huts, 8 bunkers and 4 tunnels.
(5) 1 SAS Sqn deployed one LRRP.

/17.

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18.

402 detainees of which 42 were confirmed as VC infrastructure
3 crew served weapons
105 weapons
3500 rounds of assorted ammunition
11 mines
10 grenades
300 lbs of documents
1 Typewriter
900 lbs of rice

16. Administration. The concept of operations allowed for all administration and logistic resupply to operate from 1 ATF Base. As a result no problems arose.

17. Lessons Learned.

a. The predicted routes of approach, which were the traditional routes the VC had used for some years, can be successfully intercepted during the rice harvest season by wide scale patrolling.

b. Rice denial operations can be successfully mounted in PHUOC TUY Province by 1 ATF.

c. Even with the lack of silos in towns and villages and the minimum of Government control, rice can be denied to the VC. The most important aspect of denial is preventing the VC obtaining the rice directly from the paddy fields.

d. Cordon and search operations can be particularly successful during the rice harvest season, as the VC must make contact with the villagers and the VC infrastructure at this time. The capture of 42 confirmed VC infrastructure during the operation proves this lesson.

18. Commander's Comments.

a. As far as it went FORREST was a most successful operation in denying the rice to the VC. The success of the operation was due initially to the very comprehensive intelligence appreciation made as the result of pooling all intelligence information available to the many intelligence agencies within the Province.

b. While the operation denied rice to the VC during the actual period of FORREST, complete denial of rice to the VC throughout the year will not be possible until Government silos are built and all rice farmers are required by law to store their rice in these silos.

Gen. H. Harkess May

↖ (R.L. HUGHES)
Brig
Comd

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17.

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qq. 3 Jan 68.

(1) 2 RAR continued search and destroy operations. At 1140H at YS536787 B Coy contacted 3 VC with the result 1 VC KIA and 1 weapon captured. At 1150H at YS550797 B Coy contacted 3 VC with the result 2 VC KIA and 1 weapon captured. At YS541786 B Coy located a small camp which contained 800 lbs of rice. V Coy returned from its search and destroy operations to 1 ATF Base.

(2) 7 RAR continued search and destroy operations. At 0739H A Coy contacted 3 VC with the result 3 VC KIA and 3 weapons captured. At 1615H at YS423325 D Coy contacted 3 VC without result.

rr. 4 Jan 68.

(1) 2 RAR continued search and destroy operations. At 0950H at YS515763 A Coy contacted 1 VC with the result 1 VC KIA. At 1022H at YS536786 B Coy contacted 1 VC without result.

(2) 7 RAR continued search and destroy operations. At 1400H at YS410305 C Coy contacted 4 VC with the result 1 VC KIA, 6 weapons and 16 packs captured.

ss. 5 Jan 68.

(1) 1 ATF elements concluded Operation FORREST and returned to 1 ATF Base as detailed below:

- (a) By 1200H one tp of A Sqn had secured Route from FSB ALANBROOKE YS4573 to the bridge at YS436492.
- (b) Commencing 1230H, A Coy 2 RAR was extracted by one AHC from area FSB PAM YS5477.
- (c) At 1300H, B Coy 2 RAR moved from FSB PAM by APC.
- (d) At 1400H, A and D Cos 7 RAR commenced extraction by AHC from area of the CU BI rubber plantation YS4282.
- (e) On completion of A and D Coy extraction, C Coy 7 RAR returned by APC to 1 ATF Base.
- (f) At 1530H, 106 Fd Bty came out of action and returned from FSB ALANBROOKE to 1 ATF Base.
- (g) At 1530H, Bn HQ 7 RAR was extracted by air from NUI NHAN YS4379.
- (h) At 1700H B Coy 7 RAR returned with one tp A Sqn from FSB ALANBROOKE.
- (i) At 1730H, A Sqn was released from Route security.
- (j) By 1800H, all elements were in 1 ATF Base and Operation FORREST concluded.

(2) 2 RAR at 1115H at YS539789 B Coy contacted 2 VC with the result 1 VC KIA.

15. Results.

Australian Losses

4 KIA
35 WIA

VC Losses

47 KIA (BC)
2 KIA (Poss)
15 WIA

/18.

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AVFBC-RE-H (Undated) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report

DA, HQ II FFORCEV, APO San Francisco 96266 16 MAY 1968

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

The attached after action report for the 1st Australian Task Force, Vietnam, Operation Forrest, is forwarded in accordance with MACV Dir 335-8, 1 September 1967, subject: Combat Operations After Action Reports (MACV J3-32(K-1)). Pertinent comment follows: This headquarters requests MACV consider the proposal made by Commander ATF, page 18, para 18b, which states: While the operation denied rice to the VC during the actual period of Operation Forrest, complete denial of rice to the VC throughout the year will not be possible until Government silos are built and all rice farmers are required by law to store their rice in these silos.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

OB Fony

O. H. FONY
SLT, AGC
Asst AG

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ANNEX A TO
1 ATF AFTER ACTION
REPORT
(OP FORREST)
DATED 68

DESTRUCTION OF CAVES AT XS336680
BY 2 TP 1 FD SQN

Introduction

1. The cave complex was found by C Coy 7 RAR in the NJI DINH Hills during Operation LORNE. This area has been occupied by the C41 (Chou Dui) Company and the caves showed evidence of use as protection against artillery and air strikes. The caves were of a natural formation.

Outline of Task

2. 2 Tp (-) was allotted the task of clearing and destroying the caves. The reserve combat team was committed and Tp Comd moved forward to take command of the task.

3. The caves were blown using 40 lb beehive charges which provided a good shattering effect. One hundred 40 lb beehive charges were flown out to the job site on the 20 Dec 67. The charges were carried by UH1B Iroquois and winched into the site. Each sortie carried three lots of beehive charges. Each winch load consisted of two charges.

4. The distance to the task site from the loading point was approximately 10,000 metres and using three aircraft, the time taken to complete the fly in was two hours. On the following morning additional explosives were flown in to an improvised LZ.

Summary

5. The caves were destroyed by the afternoon of the 21 Dec 67. The beehive charges provided a good shattering effect. Several combinations were tried in the ring mains varying the distance between the charges.

6. The demolition of the caves was considered successful. A sketch map of the layout of the caves is attached.

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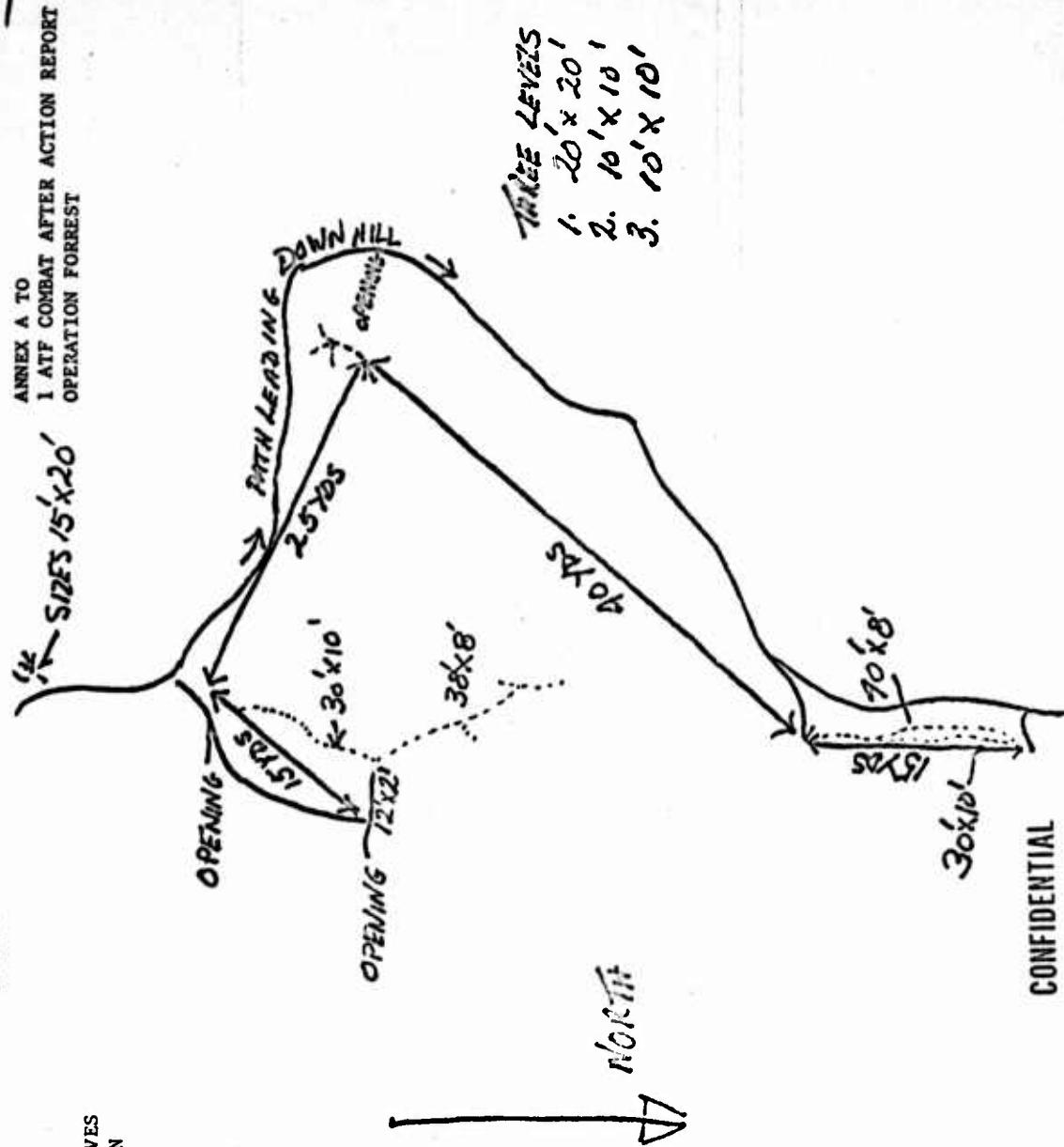
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ENCLOSURE PAGE EIGHT NOT PAGED

ANNEX A TO
1 ATF COMBAT AFTER ACTION REPORT
OPERATION FOREST

ALL TUNNELS WERE LOCATED AT GR336680
BROKEN LINES SHOW APPROX LAYOUT OF TUNNELS AND CAVES
ALL TUNNELS AND CAVES WERE OF NATURAL CONSTRUCTION



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VIETNAM 1:50,000

EDITION 1-AMC
XUẤT BẢN LẦN THỨ 1-AMC

XUYÊN MỘC

MAP
ROUTE PROCUREMENT
IN PHUOC TUY PROVINCE
INCLUDING TATE AOS
AND FSB

84S

FSB
DAWN

B

2 RAR



**ANNEX 2 TO
LATIF COMBAT OPERATIONS AFTER ACTION REPORT
OPERATION FOREST**

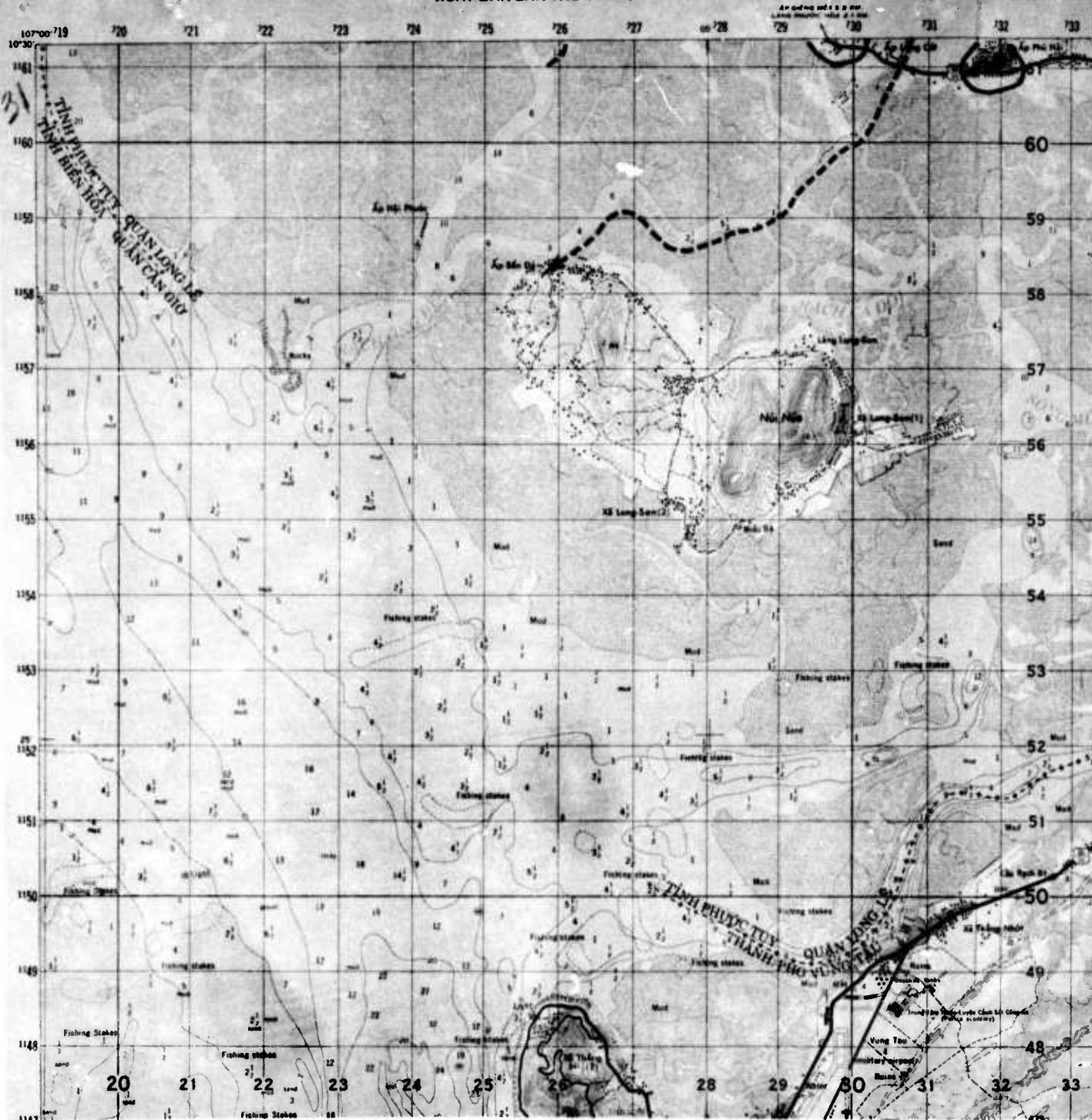
73+
2 RAR = 1 SAS

-D

VIETNAM 1:50,000

EDITION 1-AMS
XUẤT-BẢN LẦN THỨ 1-AMS

XÃ VÙNG



XÃ VŨNG TÀU

MAP 20E.4 Page 22
40 MINUTES MILES 0.6 KM.

SHEET 5429 W
SINCE 1914

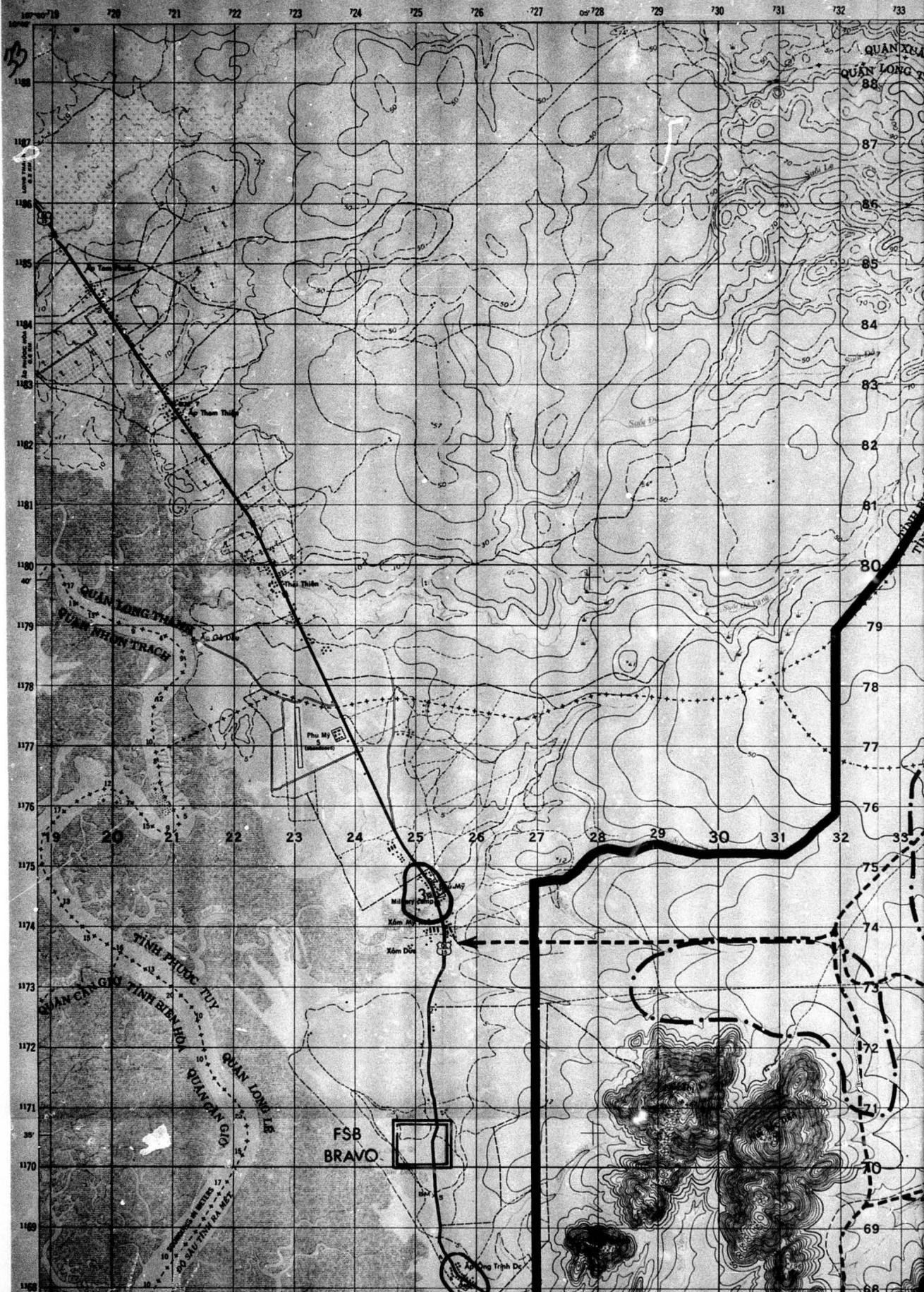


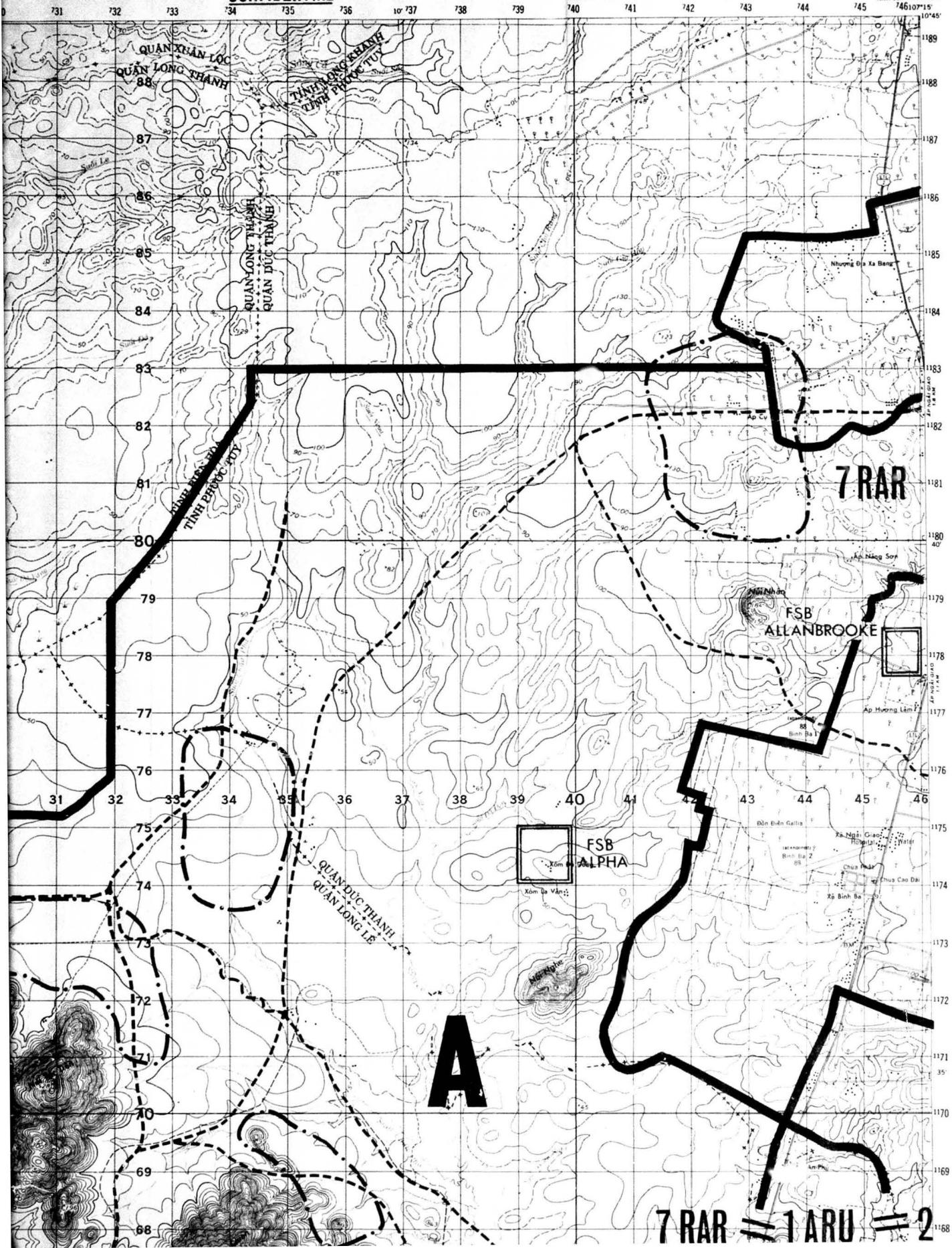
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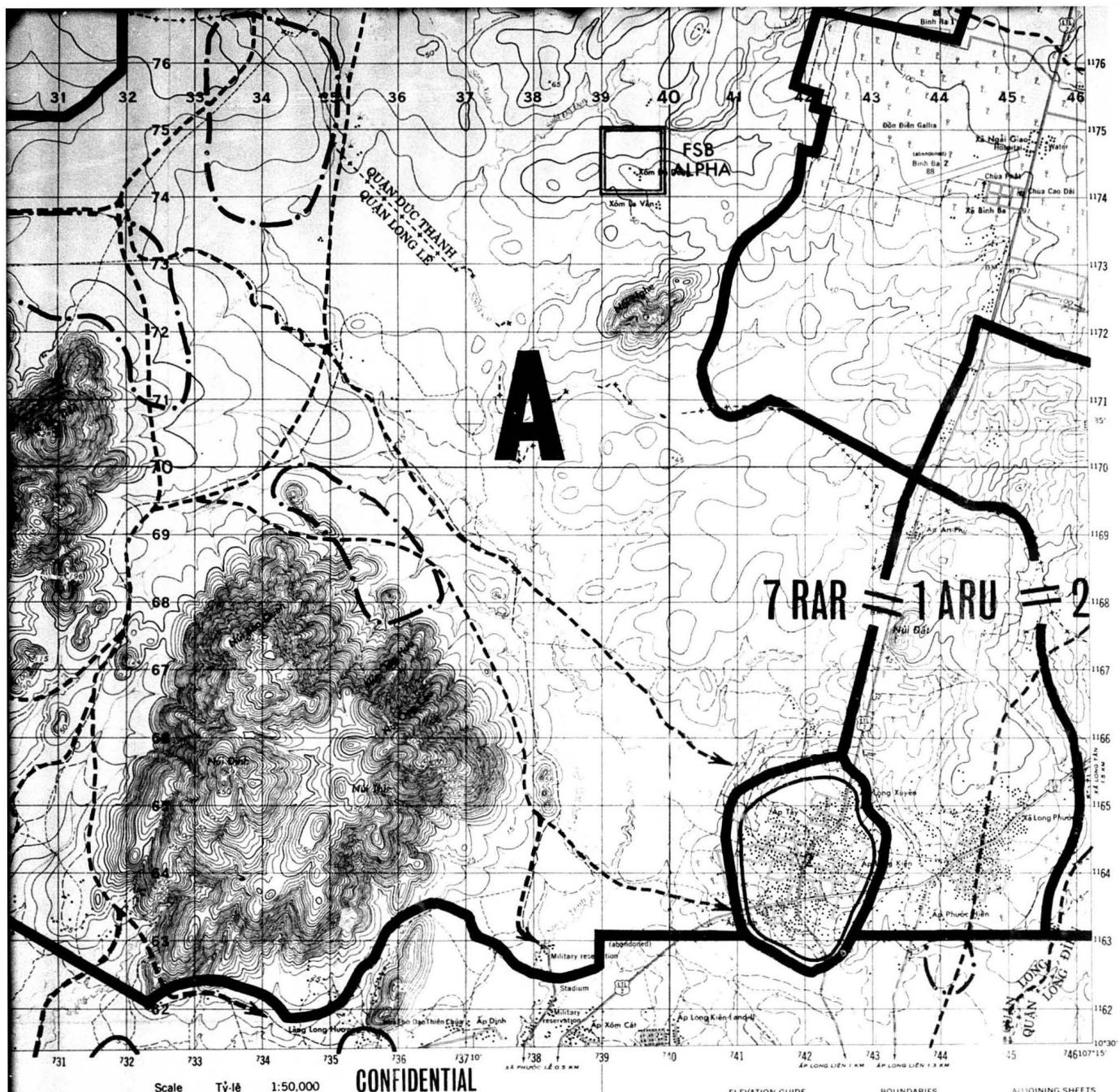
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EDITION 1-AMS
XUẤT-BẢN LẦN THỨ 1-AMS

XÃ BÌNH B







Scale Tỷ lệ 1:50,000

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INTERVAL - 10-20 METERS

CONTours - 5-10 METERS

EVEREST

UTM: ZONE 48 (BLACK NUMBERED LINES)

TRANSVERSE MERCATOR

MEAN SEA LEVEL AT HÀ TIỀN

INDIAN DATUM 1960

APPROXIMATE LEVEL OF

LOWEST LOW WATER

CREDITS

AMS (PV), U.S. ARMY 1966

... NGS, VIETNAM

USAMFE, NGS, VIETNAM

NOVOCARO CHARTS

99th ENGR BN, U.S. ARMY

COMMANDING OFFICER, ARMY MAP SERVICE, WASHINGTON, D.C.

BẢN ĐỒ NÀY ĐỀN NHA ĐỊA ĐƯ QUỐC GIA, DALAT, VIETNAM

ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES IS APPROXIMATE
BẢN ĐỒ NÀY CHỈ PHÁC HÓA VỚI TÍNH CÁCH ĐẠI CƯỜNG

GLOSSARY—CỘ TÙ

village
swamp, pond, lake
pepper
plantation
village
temple
orchard
land grant
hill, mountain
stream
stream
village

KHOẢNG CÁCH ĐÈU VÒNG CAO-ĐỘ: 10-20 MÈT

CÁC VÒNG CAO-ĐỘ PHÙ TÙNG 5-10 MÈT

KHÔI HẦU ĐỨC

Ở VÙNG

THÔNG CHIẾU

BÌNH DIỄN CHIẾU

HỆ THỐNG TRUNG BÌNH

CHIẾU

MẶT BIỂN TRUNG BÌNH

CHIẾU

MẶT THỦY ĐAO CHUẨN

CHIẾU

UTM TỪNG 1000 MÈT KHU HÌNH HỘA

NGHĨA HỘI CÓ CHIẾU 500 MÈT

UTM

MẶT BIỂN TRUNG BÌNH

CHIẾU

HỆ THỐNG TRUNG BÌNH

CHIẾU

LA MẶT BIỂN PHÙNG CHỨNG

CHIẾU

LÚC THẤP NHẤT

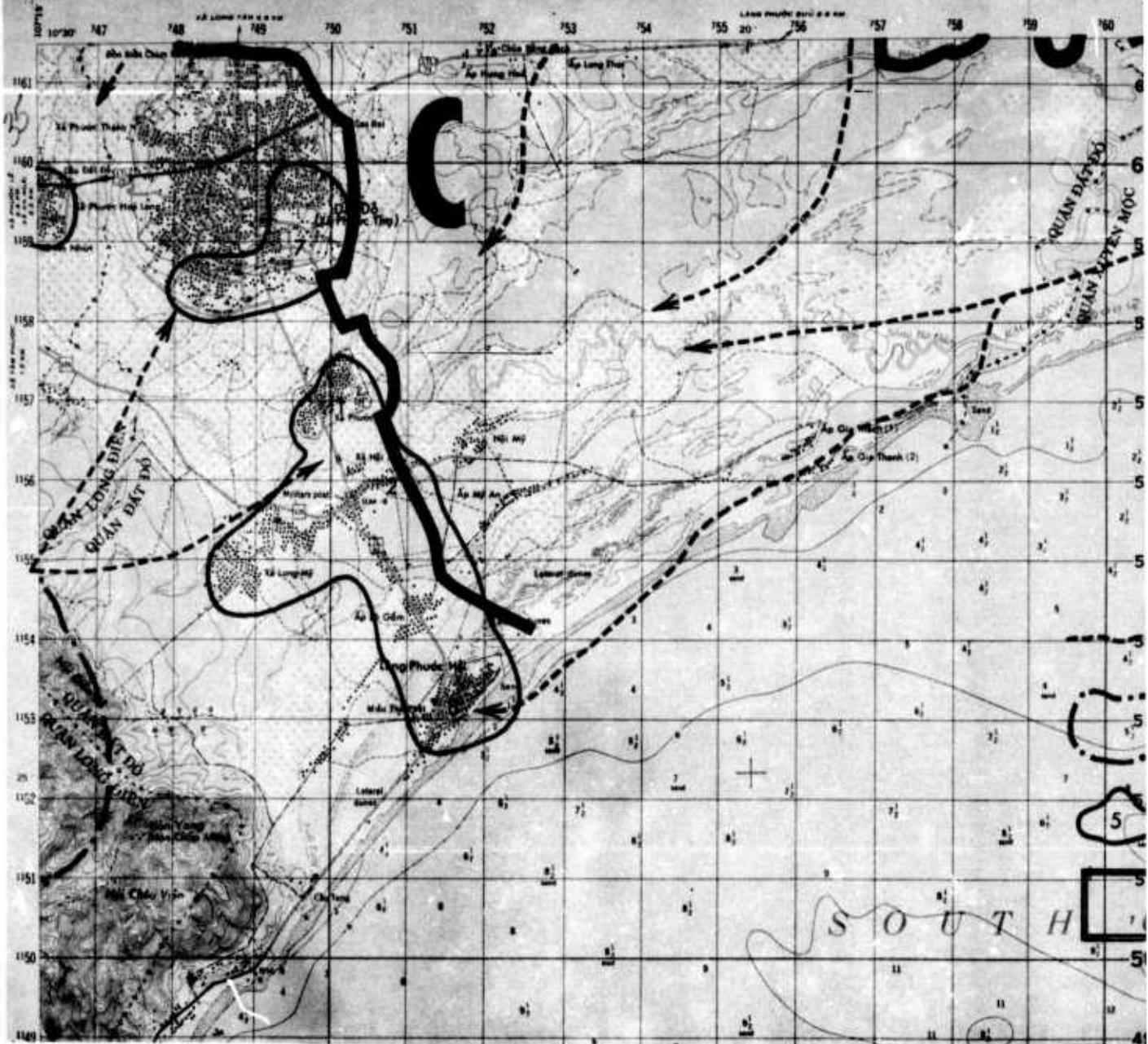
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EDITION 1-AMS
XUẤT-BẢN LẦN THỨ 1-AMS

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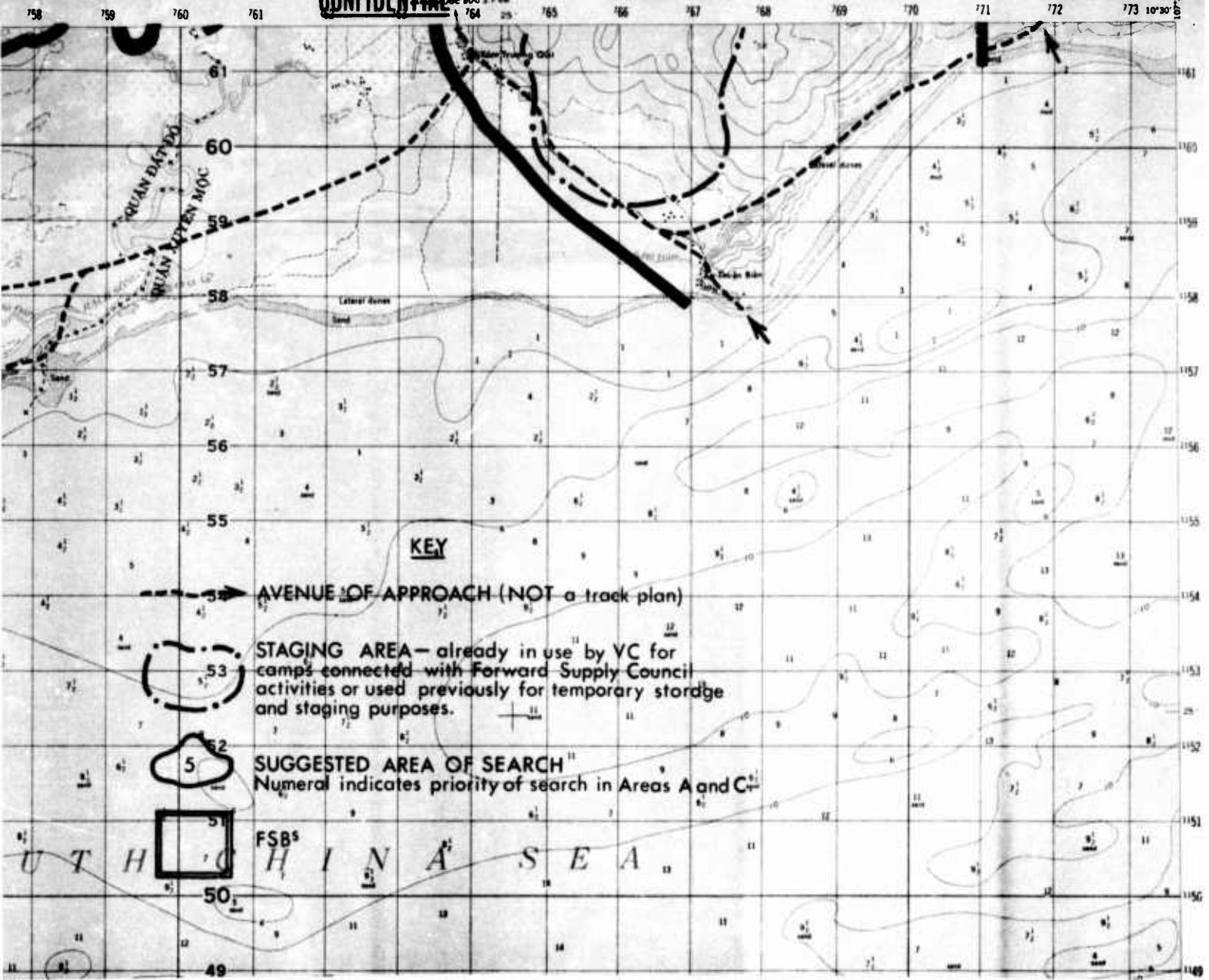
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MAP 4 OF 4

Page 24

SHEET 6429 I
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31
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